

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

CONTACT: OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
(916) 657-7202
(800) 735-2929 (TT/TDD)
(800) 735-2922 (Voice)



97-30
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 4, 1997

1997 VEHICLE THEFT PREVENTION WEEK, AUGUST 3rd - 9TH

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is taking advantage of Vehicle Theft Prevention Week to increase public awareness on their vehicle theft prevention program. "California law enforcement has made great strides in vehicle theft recoveries, however, we need assistance from the public in order to reduce vehicle theft in the first place," CHP Commissioner Dwight Helmick said.

Citizens can play an important role in preventing vehicle theft. The CHP wants everyone to be aware of the ten most important steps to protecting yourself and your vehicle:

1. Always lock your vehicle
2. Always utilize anti-theft devices.
3. Always park your vehicle in a well-lighted area at night.
4. Never leave your keys in your vehicle.
5. Never hide a spare ignition key in the vehicle.
6. Install an audible alarm system.
7. When possible, park your vehicle in a secure garage.
8. Be aware of your surroundings prior to leaving your vehicle.
9. Be aware of high theft vehicles.
10. Always make sure you receive an ownership certificate when purchasing a used vehicle.

The top ten automobiles stolen in California are the 1988 & '89 Toyota Camry and the 1981 Toyota Corolla. Next is the 1990 & '91 Honda Accord. The 1987 Toyota Camry ranks number six followed by the Oldsmobile Cutlass. The 1980 & '82 Toyota Corolla ranks eight and

-M O R E-

2-2-2-2-2

nine with the 1985 Oldsmobile Cutlass ranking number ten. The top nine personal trucks stolen in California are all Toyotas. The 1986 pickup, the 1985 van and pickup, the 1988 pickup and the 1986 van. The 1987 pickup and van rank number six and seven followed by the 1984 pickup and van. The tenth ranking personal truck is the 1989 Chevrolet pickup.

How can citizens help prevent vehicle theft? By following the ten steps listed above and by using the CHP's toll-free hotline, 1-800-TELL-CHP, to report suspected vehicle theft activity. This activity includes anything suspicious involving vehicle repairs late at night. It may also include vehicles coming and going from one location not noted for high traffic or newer model vehicles being dismantled for no apparent reason. Citizens should also be aware of unfamiliar suspicious people in their neighborhoods, parking areas or around vehicles. "By calling this hotline, Californians can join forces with the CHP and help combat vehicle theft," the Commissioner said. Calls are handled 24-hours, seven days a week and the caller has the choice of remaining anonymous.

#